

Message Text

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SUBJEC-: ARRIVAL STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR LEWIS

1. TEXT FOLLOWS OF AMBASSADOR'S ARRIVAL STATEMENT.
2. BEGIN TEXT. AMBASSADOR AMIR, MR. RAVIV, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:
3. TODAY IS A VERY SPECIAL DAY IN MY LIFE--SPECIAL FOR TWO DISTINCT REASONS.
4. FIRST, I AM HONORED TO REPRESENT MY COUNTRY AS ITS AMBASSADOR. AND I AM DOUBLY HONORED THAT IT WILL BE IN ISRAEL THAT I SERVE AS AMBASSADOR FOR THE FIRST TIME. THERE IS LITERALLY NO OTHER EMBASSY ANYWHERE WHICH COULD PROVIDE FOR ME A COMPARABLE MIXTURE OF PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE AND PERSONAL FULFILLMENT.

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FOR YOUR COUNTRY OCCUPIES A SPECIAL PLACE IN OUR HEARTS. EVERY PRESIDENT AND EVERY CONGRESS SINCE THE DAYS OF HARRY TRUMAN HAVE PLEDGED THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL. IN DOING SO, THEY HAVE EXPRESSED THE SENTIMENTS OF THE

AMERICAN PEOPLE, ALL OF US--JEWS AND NON-JEWS ALIKE. THAT SUPPORT REMAINS AS STRONG AS EVER TODAY. I CANNOT CON-

CEIVE OF A TIME IN WHICH IT MIGHT FALTER, FOR THE TIES THAT BIND US ARE MANIFOLD. THEY TRANSCEND THE NORMAL BONDS BETWEEN TWO GOVERNMENTS THAT SHARE MANY IDEALS, VALUES, INTERESTS, AND GOALS. THEY REST ALSO ON THE HUMAN LINKS BETWEEN OUR PEOPLE AND YOUR PEOPLE WHOSE SUFFERING AND SACRIFICE WE HONOR AND RESPECT.

5. SECOND, I SENSE THAT I AM ARRIVING AT A MOMENT WHEN ONE MAY REASONABLY HOPE SOON TO SEE NEW PROGRESS TOWARD A LASTING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

6. ISRAEL'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN EVERY FIELD HAVE IMPRESSED THE ENTIRE WORLD. AND IN YESTERDAY'S ELECTIONS YOU DEMONSTRATED AGAIN THE VITALITY OF YOUR DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL SYSTEM, AN ACHIEVEMENT WHICH WE AS AMERICANS CAN PARTICULARLY APPRECIATE.

7. MY GOVERNMENT--AND I, AS ITS REPRESENTATIVE--CONGRATULATE AND LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING CLOSELY WITH YOUR NEW NATIONAL LEADERS. WE KNOW THAT THESE WORKING RELATIONS WILL IN THE FUTURE, AS IN THE PAST, BE SHAPED BY UNIQUE BONDS OF SHARED IDEALS AND KINSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO PEOPLES.

8. PRESIDENT CARTER HAS NOTED MANY TIMES THESE SPECIAL TIES BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES. AND HE HAS REPEATEDLY STRESSED HIS DETERMINATION TO WORK FOR AN END TO THE WAR WHICH HAS PLAGUED THE MIDDLE EAST FOR OVER A QUARTER CENTURY.

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9. THE PRESIDENT HAS STATED THAT HE CONSIDERS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL "ONE OF THE FINEST ACTS OF THE WORLD NATIONS," AND THAT HE HOLDS AS "THE FIRST PREREQUISITE TO A LASTING PEACE THE RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL BY HER NEIGHBORS; ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST, ISRAEL'S RIGHT

TO EXIST PERMANENTLY, ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST IN PEACE."

10. MANY NATIONAL LEADERS HAVE VOICED A COMMITMENT TO SEEK A MAJOR STEP TOWARD PEACE DURING 1977.

11. WE ALL KNOW THAT WILL NOT BE EASY. BUT THE U.S. STANDS READY TO OFFER ITS GOOD OFFICES WHERE CALLED UPON. PRESIDENT CARTER HAS OFTEN PLEDGED THAT WE WILL NEVER SEEK TO IMPOSE OUR WILL. RATHER WE WILL APPLY ALL OUR BRAINS AND ENERGY TO HELP THOSE DIRECTLY INVOLVED FIND A WAY THROUGH THE DIPLOMATIC LABYRINTH TO THE TRUE PEACE THAT LIES SOMEWHERE AT ITS CENTER.

12. IN PURSUING THIS GOAL, PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE HAVE BEEN MEETING WITH LEADERS OF THE NATIONS MOST CONCERNED WITH PEACE IN THIS AREA, AND WE EXPECT THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO VISIT ISRAEL AND OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AGAIN SOON.

13. IN CONCLUSION, LET ME SAY AGAIN HOW TRULY DELIGHTED I AM TO BE IN ISRAEL. AND MY WIFE, HER MOTHER, AND OUR TWO CHILDREN--WHO WILL ALL BE JOINING ME NEXT MONTH--ARE EVEN MORE EXCITED, IF THAT BE POSSIBLE. WE LOOK FORWARD TO OUR STAY HERE WITH THE ABSOLUTE CONVICTION THAT NO MATTER HOW DIFFICULT THE PROBLEMS WHICH FACE OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS, WE WILL TACKLE THEM TOGETHER IN A FASHION WHICH WILL STRENGTHEN THE BONDS BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES. AND, IN DOING SO, WE HOPE THAT WE CAN FINALLY LAY A FOUNDATION FOR LASTING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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